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CITY OF OAKLAND
POLICE DEPARTMENT

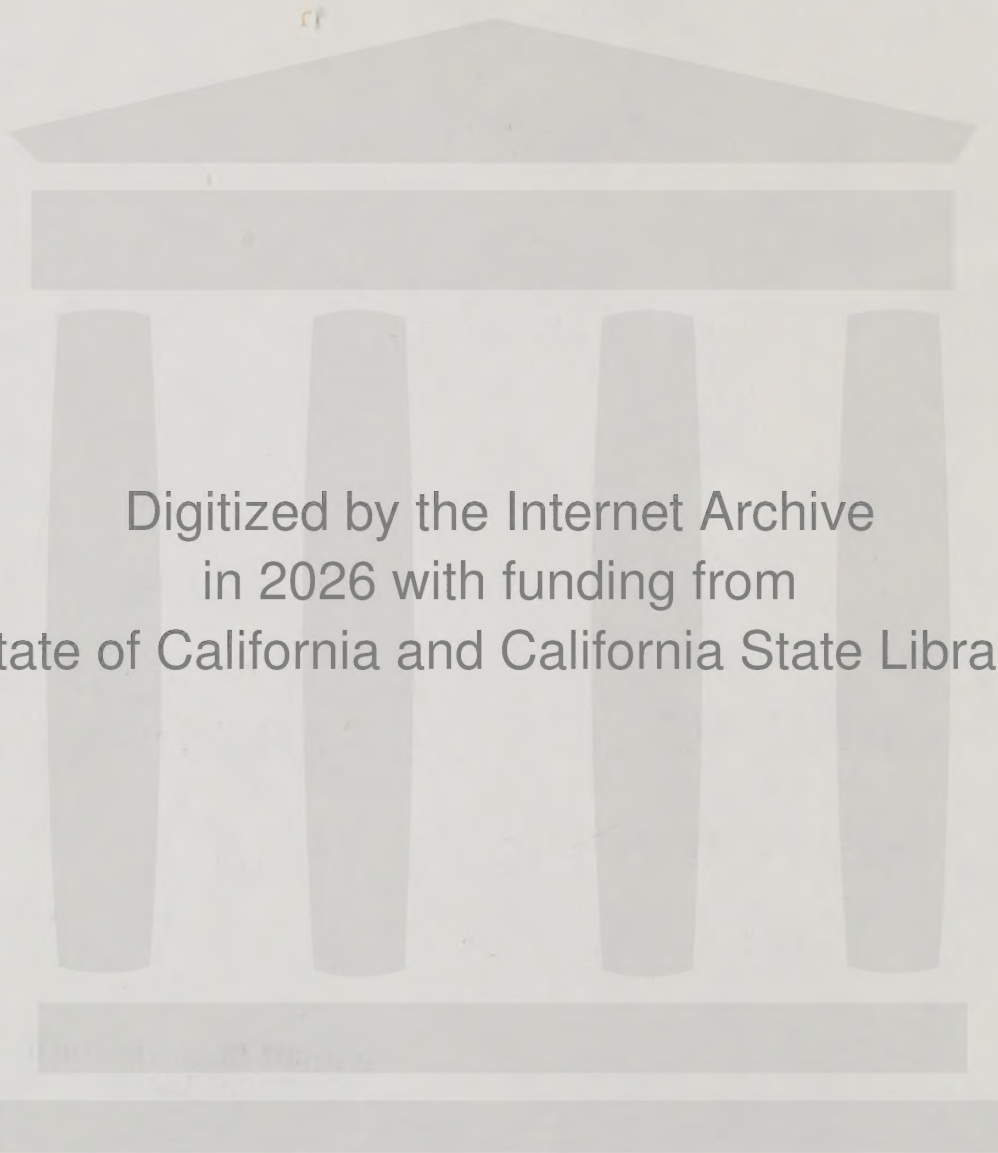
**OAKLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT
HISTORY 1920 - 1930
(PART 4)**

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PART IV:

A HISTORY OF THE OAKLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT:

THE ROARING TWENTIES

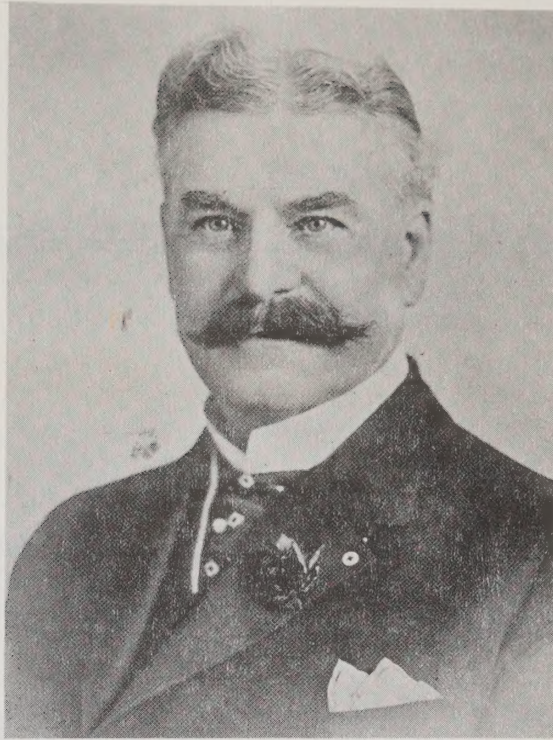
by

Phil McArdle

Oakland shared fully in the financial boom of the 1920s, when the United States reached previously unknown levels of prosperity. With development as the watchword, vast sums were earned and spent, and huge changes took place in the city.

Between 1910 and 1930, the population of Oakland almost doubled, rising from 150,174 to 284,063; more than half of this growth occurred in the 1920s. Reflecting the growth of the population and the roaring post-war boom, by 1928 -- the peak year of the boom -- deposits in commercial and savings banks had risen to five times their level in 1910, from \$39,279,200 to \$205,526,148. This amazing increase in wealth was accompanied by industrial and commercial growth and ambitious civic improvements:

- factories increased from 441 in 1910 to almost 1,500 by 1928;
- Lakeside Drive was completed (1922) and Lake Merritt was sealed off from the Estuary;
- the City spent \$10,000,000 developing the harbor and established the Port of Oakland (1927);
- the Posey Tube ("the longest subaqueous vehicular tube in the world") was constructed beneath the estuary as a replacement for the old Webster Street drawbridge which had linked Oakland and Alameda;
- the East Bay Municipal Utility District was formed in 1923, and \$39,000,000 was spent to complete the Mokelumne project, bringing mountain water from the Sierras a hundred miles away for domestic use in Oakland and the Eastbay;



John L. Davie, Mayor of Oakland

- in one month of spectacular work, and at a cost of \$11,000,000, the Oakland Municipal Airport was built and opened for use by trans-pacific aircraft on June 28, 1927;*

Beginning the decade as a residential suburb across the bay from San Francisco, Oakland was becoming known by its close as "a city of industries and commerce." The Chamber of Commerce said proudly, "Great factories and beautiful stores, clubs and homes -- there are the signs of Oakland's forward advance."

Mayor Davie

Throughout the boom, John L. Davie (1850-1934), the era's dominant politician, and one of the major figures in Oakland's history, presided over City Hall. The Mayor was, according to Beth Bagwell,

...naturally a convivial sort...a dramatic-looking man with a flowing mustache, and he dressed splendidly. He always wore a red carnation in his lapel...He could be counted on to put up a good show when there was any excuse for a ceremony. He always threw out the first baseball of the Pacific Coast League's season, and he welcomed every celebrity from

*In 1962 the Municipal Airport was renamed the Oakland International Airport.



Oakland Municipal Airport, 1927: The "Bird of Paradise" just before Lieutenants Hegenberger and Maitland took off in it on the first successful trans-Pacific flight to Hawaii.



After their safe return, Maitland and Hegenberger rode in triumph through downtown Oakland. (The parade had just turned off Broadway onto Telegraph Avenue.)

Charles Lindbergh to Leo the MGM Lion. He loved Oakland; he popularized the slogan "my city Oakland" that appeared on banners and souvenirs... When he came into office, automobiles were just beginning to be more common than horses. Before he left, he had helped to make the Bay Bridge a reality.

Born in New York in 1850, educated in Chicago, Davie led an adventurous life as a lawyer, a miner, and a cattleman before coming to Oakland. Once here, he entered the ferry business, and became involved in the waterfront issue. With Mayor Mott, he became a leading figure in the City's recovery of the waterfront -- the future Port of Oakland -- from Horace Carpentier. Davie's political star rose into the ascendent in 1915 when he succeeded Frank Mott as mayor. He won four straight mayoral elections, holding office from 1915 to 1931.

Mayor Davie, a Republican maverick who forged a strong relationship with the working men and women of the City, secured his power base by standing for low taxes and limited government. He mastered the commission form of government, which had been adopted in 1910, and which made each council member the executive head of a City department. So much was accomplished due to his personal influence that the administrative weaknesses of this system did not appear until late in the 1920s.

At the beginning of the decade Mayor Davie did not have the votes on the Council to choose the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety. He and his principal ally, Councilman Baccus, were usually out-voted 3-2 on police issues.

Chief Lynch

In 1920, as Commissioner of Public Safety F. F. Morse's term approached its end, Police Department morale was low due to the animosities caused by the gambling scandal of 1919. The Department was polarized into pro- and anti-Nedderman factions.

Part of the reason, it was agreed by contemporary observers, that Commissioner Morse had chosen Captain Lynch to replace Chief Nedderman was the high regard in which all members of the Department held him. But the trials and law suits generated by the gambling scandal were, of course, beyond resolution by internal Departmental action. Nevertheless, during his year and a half as head of the Department, Chief Lynch provided efficient personal leadership.

Police Training

Looking to the future, Chief Lynch recognized the need for improved training for the members of the Department. He directed Lt. William F. Woods (a former Chief) to organize a Departmental police school, and on July 6, 1920, he issued the following order:



Chief J. Frank Lynch

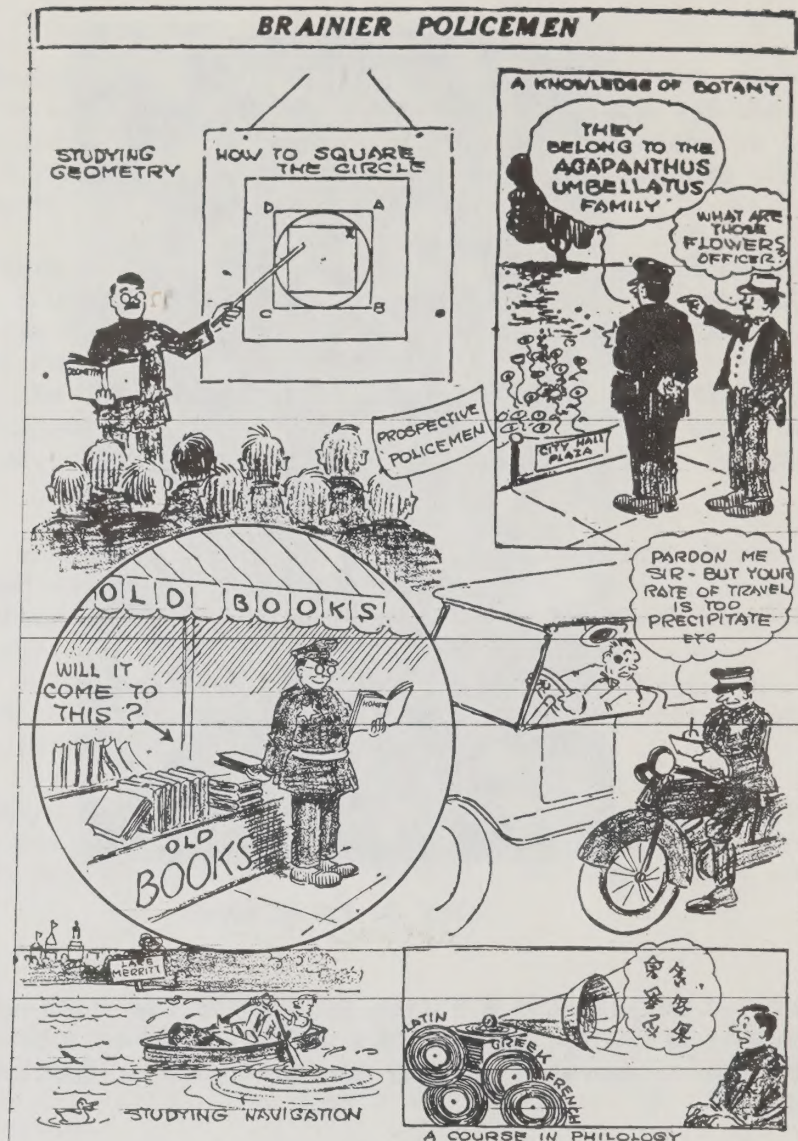
There is established a Police School for the instruction of the new members of this Department. The school will be in charge of Lieutenant Wm. F. Woods, who will shortly announce date of opening and other details.

All members of the Police Department are welcome to attend the school and those appointed subsequent to July 1, 1919, will be required to report to the school.

This marks the actual beginning of mandatory training in the Department.

The program developed by Lt. Woods began with a "series of practical lessons in First Aid to the Injured and other instructions necessary in police work" by Dr. Eugene May of the American Red Cross. These were followed by:

- a class on Criminal Identification by Inspector H. H. Caldwell (who became an internationally recognized expert in the field),



"Brainier Policeman" -- August 18, 1925, Tribune

- a class on Traffic Law by Sergeant J. T. Fahy, and
- lectures on law by District Attorney Ezra Decoto and Judges Mortimer Smith and George Samuels of the Police Court.

The first aid classes were held in the Municipal Auditorium, and the others in a court room at City Hall.

The Police School was so well received that it became a permanent part of the department. It provided lectures and practical demonstrations by outside instructors and older members of the department.

The Department encouraged individual officers to supplement the offerings of the Police School by means of self-study. In 1927 Chief Drew published a bibliography of "Books for Police Officers" compiled by the Oakland Public Library. This constituted, as Mabel W. Thomas, the Acting Librarian, wrote to Chief Drew, "a practical working list of the best and latest books on criminology and police practice to be found in our library."

The bibliography contained the classics of police literature -- Hans Gross' Criminal Psychology, Sir Edward Henry's Classification and Use of Finger Prints, and others. It also included topical materials such as books on how to pass civil service tests and how to get promoted.

Although the Police School represented real progress for the Department, it was relatively informal, and lacked a professional administrative structure and supporting publications program. This was shown in 1930 when the Fire Department announced a modernization of its rule book, and the Police Department realized that its own manual of rules and regulations had not been revised since 1912. The official regulations still included directions for the use and care of lanterns carried by officers mounted on bicycles, their deportment on meeting horse-drawn vehicles, and other obsolete material.

As a result, Chief Drew ordered the creation of a new set of regulations in a loose-leaf format with space for new pages, memoranda, and notes. This blue, soft-covered Manual, subtitled "Instruction and Rule Book," was revised several times and was standard issue for more than a decade.*

Chief Thompson**

On January 24, 1921, Commissioner Morse removed Chief Lynch for an alleged "failure to repress crime." When Lynch heard the news, he said, "We rise and we fall. I bow to the will of the council. The vicissitudes of politics are too much for me."

*The Police School did not develop into the Police Academy until 1946. The current program of training publications began in 1950, with a training bulletin on the use of lethal force.

**Fenton G. Thompson was born in Michigan on February 25, 1877. His family moved to Oakland in 1879, and he was educated in the Oakland public schools. Thompson was appointed to the Department as a Special Police Officer on July 1, 1901, and became a regular police officer on March 11, 1903. On July 1, 1911, he was appointed an Inspector. He was retired temporarily on half-pay due to physical disability on February 1, 1912.

In making his final appointment to the position of Chief of Police, Morse chose Inspector Fenton G. Thompson. Held in high regard by those who knew him, Thompson was relatively unknown in the Department, and it was said that many officers had never met him. This was partially due to the fact that his service with the Department had been interrupted for seven years. Illness (undoubtedly tuberculosis) forced him to retire on half pay in 1912. He moved to Arizona in hopes of recovering his health, and benefited from the south-western climate. By 1914, he had recovered sufficiently to accept appointment as a deputy U.S. Marshall. Stationed in San Diego, he helped unearth the once famous "Hindu plot" and develop the evidence that convicted many of the men involved in it.*

In 1917, Thompson was assigned to a naval intelligence office in San Francisco, apparently in connection with the trials arising from the "Hindu plot." On December 9, 1918, after the trials were over, he returned to full duty with the Police Department, and Chief Nedderman placed him in charge of the Neutrality Squad.

Thompson's precise role in the investigation of the "Hindu Plot" is obscure. That he was an enterprising investigator can be seen from his role as an Inspector in the apprehension of Dr. James Thompson, an abortionist who fled to Mexico, and while Chief in directing the the apprehension of the "Thirty Strong" gang and the extradition from Denmark of Emil Forsburg (alias Farsleigh), the so-called "Oakland Ponzi."

When Thompson was granted leave to become Chief of Police on January 24, 1921, he candidly recognized the morale problems in the Department. He said,

I am not connected with any group or faction or coterie, nor do I regard myself as accountable to anybody save the body of the entire citizenry...The personnel of the department is such that once an effective esprit de corps is developed I believe its efforts will meet with the satisfaction of every class and creed..."

*The Ghadr Party, a Hindu revolutionary movement, aimed to drive the British out of India by armed force. It operated covertly in California prior to World War I, finding members among the multitudes of Hindus then employed as migrant workers on California farms. Soon after the world war started, Germany began supplying the Ghadr Party with money and weapons. The Party raised an army of some 8,000 volunteers and began infiltrating it into India. After the plot was discovered, Franz Bopp, the German Consul General in San Francisco, Eckhart von Schack, the vice-consul, Lt. Wilhelm von Brinken, the military attache, Dr. Chandra Kanta Chakravarty, the liaison between Ghadr Party and the German government, and twenty-seven others were arrested for violating American neutrality laws. In 1918 they were convicted and sentenced to Federal prison.

Thompson appears to have taken a wide-ranging interest in the well-being of the officers, but his most lasting contribution as Chief was to create the honor roll of slain officers. Announcing that nine gold stars, each symbolizing the death "in action" of a member of the Department, would be woven into "an elaborate commemorative banner," he said,

The public, and even the members of our own department, too soon forget about the valiant deeds of their companions who have died in the performance of their duties. It would be a fine thing and a proper tribute to these dead men if something tangible could be had to commemorate their memory. I am now considering a gold star banner, but later some more permanent memorial should be erected.

Thompson did not have an opportunity to follow through on this project.* On July 1, 1921, when a new administration took office, the new Commissioner chose a new Chief. Thompson returned to duty as an Inspector. He died unexpectedly in the aftermath of serious surgery on the evening of March 3, 1922:

Many officials are in mourning today for the death of Fenton G. Thompson, police inspector and former chief of police, who died last night at Merritt hospital...Police courts adjourned out of respect to his memory and the flag on the city hall was placed at half mast.

Chief Drew**

In the election of May 10, 1921, Frank Colbourn won a seat on the City Council. He had been the Secretary of the Civil Service Commission, and during the campaign he allied himself with Mayor Davie. Although he was expected to select a new Chief, who he would choose was not known.

As the Department was then organized, the Captain of Inspectors was the second in command, and designated Acting Chief whenever the Chief was away. Consequently, there was an expectation that the Captain of Inspectors would

*Subsequently a memorial display of badges was maintained for many years, and in 1987 the names on the honor role were engraved in marble in the lobby of the Police Administration Building.

**James T. Drew was appointed to the Department as a Patrolman, July 1, 1901; temporarily retired in 1904 and reinstated in 1908; promoted to Detective, October 19, 1910, becoming an Inspector, July 8, 1911; promoted to Captain of Detectives, April 19, 1920; appointed as Chief of Police in 1921; returned to Captain of Inspectors on July 11, 1927; reappointed as Chief, March 27, 1931. Permanently retired, January 1, 1934. He served as president of the California Peace Officers Association, vice-president of the International Chiefs of Police, and secretary of the Pacific Coast International Law Enforcement Officials Association. He passed away on June 7, 1948.



Chief James T. Drew

normally be promoted when a new Chief was appointed. Such a succession was thought to be consistent with removing the police department from the spoils system.

Commissioners Jackson and Morse had not followed this pattern. They had appointed a Sergeant, a Lieutenant, an Inspector, and a Central Division Captain as Chiefs. But Colbourn immediately chose Captain of Inspectors James T. Drew as the new Chief of Police, and the City Council appointed him on July 1, 1921.

Within a week of taking office, Commissioner Colbourn and Chief Drew began to address the problem of factionalism in the police department -- the divisions and animosities existing between adherents of former Chief Nedderman and former Chief Petersen.

The new Commissioner held a Departmental meeting in the City Council's chamber at City Hall on the afternoon of July 8, 1921. More than 150 officers attended, and Captain Lynch acted as chairman.

In his address to the officers, Colbourn made a strong appeal for an end of factionalism. Asking the members of the Department to work together in

harmony for the good of the force and the advancement of the City's interests, he said,

...We city employees have one thing to give to our employers -- the public -- and that is service. Service is the dividend we give the stockholders of this great corporation, the city of Oakland; therefore, to serve well and honorably should be our aim...

I think that most of you are my personal friends; I feel that my past record of service in the civil service work of the city entitles me to have this thought; but...It has been reported that the police department contains many factions; if this is a fact it is unfortunate and it will bring trouble to the whole city service...factions must cease and petty differences and jealousies must stop.

For my part, in entering the office as Commissioner of Public Health and Safety I have wiped the slate clean and have begun anew. I have promised the people a clean, constructive, business administration, and this promise I propose to keep...

I have appointed Chief Drew as your immediate superior officer. He is not a new hand at police business and you all know him and know that he is honest and fair...I shall back him up in all matters. He is responsible to me and I am responsible to the public...therefore let your light so shine that they, the citizens, may see your good works and honor you with their respect and confidence.

Colbourn's speech was received with applause. Chief Drew spoke briefly, supporting Commissioner Colbourn's remarks, and assuring the officers that he would work with them in every possible way to reach the goals outlined by the commissioner. He too asked for their cooperation, and as the years passed, he earned it. In 1927, Frank Merritt, the Alameda County historian, wrote of him, "Perhaps no Chief since Adelbert Wilson so inspired the confidence and commanded the respect and deference of Oakland's patrolmen." Some aspects of Chief Drew's concept of police work can be seen in Advice to Young Police Officers, a pamphlet he wrote which was widely circulated. It emphasized integrity, gentlemanly conduct, and loyalty to the Department and its leadership.

Between them, the Commissioner and the Chief brought an end to the factionalism, and restored stability to the Department during the twenties, enabling it to meet the difficult new problems posed by traffic control, prohibition, and rising levels of violence.

From Chief Drew's

"Advice To Young Police Officers"

You are to assume the duties of an executive officer of criminal law, of the ordinances of a great commercial city, and as a conservator of the public peace.

At the commencement, do not forget that in this business your character is your capital. Deal honorably with all persons, and hold your word sacred, no matter when, where or to whom given.

If you are entrusted with the care of a beat, do not play the loafer on it by lounging in the doorways or on corners, or leaning against lamp posts, but patrol your beat continually...

Learn the people residing or doing business on your beat; protect their property; make yourself useful and aid them in all their lawful pursuits; and by an upright and straightforward course, and a close attention to duty, endeavor to merit the good will of all citizens...

But in the pursuance of your duties, as much as possible avoid laying yourself under special obligation to anyone; let your services rather place others under obligation to you...

Lend a willing ear to all complaints made to you in your official capacity. The most unworthy have a right to be heard, and a word of comfort to the afflicted, or of advice to the erring, costs you nothing, and may do much good.

In ordinary cases, if you find yourself...not knowing exactly what to do, better do too little than too much...

But if an act of great violence has been committed, secure the offender at the first possible moment...

Whenever it is necessary to make an arrest, and you attempt to do it don't fail, but use no more force than is necessary to protect yourself and secure your man.

Visit the courts as often as practicable, and make yourself familiar with their rules and practice, so that when called as a witness you may not appear as a stranger.

(Continued)

Remember that in your official duties you are continually exposed to the ten thousand snares and temptations of city life. As you value the character of the Department to which you belong -- as you value your own character and happiness, and the fondest hopes of your friends, be ever on your guard...

Let promptness mark all your acts. Don't be the last man at roll call or at your post of duty...and never keep a person waiting for you one minute over the appointed time.

Select your associates with care...

To obey strictly and execute promptly the lawful orders of Superiors is one of the first requirements of the Department...Without obedience to proper authority the force would be nothing more than a mob...

Be loyal. The success of a division, district, bureau or squad depends greatly on the even team work of all its members. You should be for...the accomplishment of the functions of the department, giving your most earnest and hearty support to those in authority. You cannot be loyal and be a knocker, a grumbler, or a shirker. Men of this type in a command are a nuisance and a center of dissatisfaction. You should, therefore, discourage such tendencies in yourself and in those with whom you come in contact...

Do not criticize the actions or orders of those placed in authority over you...Your superior officer will be judged by the final results obtained through such methods as he may pursue, whereas your responsibility ceases when you have carried out his orders.

When you are on a beat in a section of the city populated by a foreign element, you will be called upon at various times to render assistance in all good faith and confidence. Such confidence should not be betrayed or abused. You should do everything within reason to assist them...cheerfully, and with the greatest possible attentiveness.

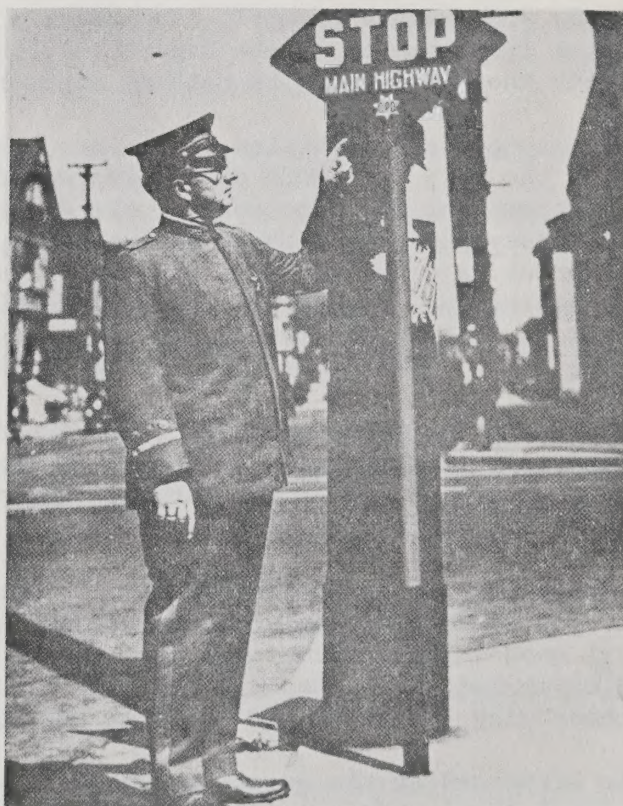
Do not appear surprised at the questions that are asked you...as a whole they are asked in good faith and warrant a courteous answer...

The early habits you form will remain with you as long as you are in the department...From the first tour of duty you perform, it should be your aim to prepare for the competitive examinations for promotion. Men who are ambitious for promotion make good policemen; they are attentive to their duty, jealous of their character and reputation, and as a result of their study of the rules and regulations, usages and customs of the department, and the laws and ordinances, are mentally well equipped.

Traffic Control

Traffic control was one of the major areas of Departmental development in the 1920s. Sgt. Charles Hemphill,* who became head of the Traffic Detail in 1922, was the police officer most closely identified with this. Promoted to Lieutenant on August 7, 1924, he was responsible for many innovations in this field. He organized the Traffic Division in 1927, and was its commander until 1939.

In the "roaring twenties" the cumulative impact of technological innovations -- radio, motion pictures, the phonograph, the telephone, the airplane, and others -- combined to speed up the pace of life in a way which



1929: Lt. Hemphill and Oakland's First Traffic Sign

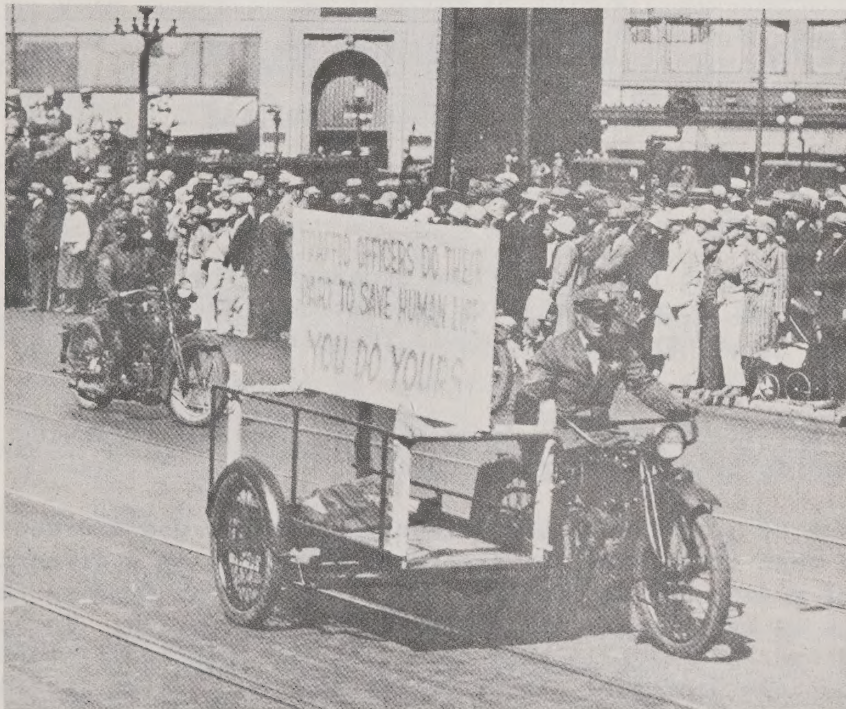
*Born on March 23, 1879, he was appointed to the Department on October 10, 1906, and promoted to Sergeant on April 15, 1913. He died on duty, January 25, 1942.

was, perhaps, without precedent in history. Everything suddenly seemed to be faster and louder -- and the epitome of speed was the noisy, endlessly proliferating automobile.

For thousands of years, urban traffic flowed along at a pace of three or four miles an hour. Pedestrians could cross streets anywhere without much risk. Traffic regulations aimed at holding horses and bicycles to a walking pace. When the automobile became commonplace in the early 1920s, the velocity of urban traffic increased at an astonishing rate.

The immediate consequence was a sharp increase in the number of pedestrians run over on downtown streets. To deal with this, Lieutenant Hemphill took a leading role in obtaining Oakland's first stop signs and traffic lights. In December, 1926, the Traffic Detail installed Oakland's first electrically-operated red and green traffic signal at the corner of 13th Street and Broadway.

Even so, it took years for pedestrians to adjust to the new traffic patterns caused by the automobile, and throughout the decade the Department conducted training in traffic safety for the general public. Newsreels made at the time show police officers and boy scouts teaching pedestrians how to



1926: Traffic Safety Parade

OAKLAND TRAFFIC FATALITIES: 1921 - 1940

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Fatalities</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Fatalities</u>
1921	223,058	50	1931	285,873	101
1922	229,851	66	1932	287,683	59
1923	236,646	68	1933	289,493	61
1924	243,441	50	1934	291,303	85
1925	250,236	58	1935	293,113	86
1926	257,031	68	1936	294,293	103
1927	263,826	56	1937	296,733	90
1928	270,621	64	1938	298,543	84
1929	277,416	81	1939	300,353	80
1930	284,063	114	1940	302,163	55

observe the lights at 19th Street and Broadway. The faces of the pedestrians clearly show their surprise at this innovation. The Department also showed films on traffic safety at local movie theaters, and conducted many traffic safety parades.

At the end of the decade, Frank Merritt made the following assessment of the Department's traffic control program:

By means of a system of a red light for danger and a green light to denote that it is safe for the traffic to move in a given direction, the flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic is regulated so that the passage is in only one direction for a given period. These automatic "stop" and "go" signals were placed at the principal intersections in the downtown district. An intermediate orange light is flashed as a signal for the traffic to start in a given direction. This is immediately followed by the green safety light. When the red light is shown, the traffic in that direction stops. An officer is stationed at these intersections with authority to place under arrest any individuals who disregard the signals. The Traffic Division, save in rare instances, has had the cooperation of the general public and the system has been highly successful in reducing the number of traffic accidents.

Prohibition Enforcement

Broadly speaking, prohibition made it a crime to sell alcoholic beverages or to manufacture them for sale. The prohibition movement, a progressive cause in which millions of people believed deeply, began in the mid-nineteenth century. It carried on fifty years of increasingly successful militant agitation, and by the turn of the century many parts of the United States were dry; i.e., places where liquor was illegal. Even where it had not succeeded, reformers kept the saloon under attack. In Oakland, for example, the Women's Christian Temperance Union was active at least as early as the 1880s.

Prohibitionists shared the popular belief in World War I as a moral crusade, and they succeeded in identifying their cause with the war effort. They persuaded the Secretary of War to prohibit the sale of liquor to soldiers and sailors, and they secured authority for the President to prohibit the use of grain or fruit by distilleries for the duration.

In 1918 the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution was introduced in Congress and passed by the necessary two-thirds majority in both houses. The first paragraph of the Amendment said,

After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

Submitted to the States, it was quickly ratified. The Congress passed the Volstead Prohibition Enforcement Act late in 1919, and national prohibition took effect at midnight, January 16-17, 1920. From coast to coast, according to press and police reports, it was greeted glumly by the wets, but without heavy drinking or other signs of defiance. But the drys celebrated their hard earned victory. The Reverend Dr. Lyman Abbott, a leader in the movement, wrote: "Because the world is awakening from its alcoholic stupor, we now seem to be approaching the end of the temperance controversy." And Josephus Daniels, former Secretary of the Navy, predicted that "...no man living will ever see a Congress that will lessen the enforcement of that law! The saloon is as dead as slavery!"

How Bootlegging Started in Oakland

The optimism of the drys ignored their own experience. "Local option" prohibition had never been a success: bootlegging developed in every dry community, including those in California. By the time national prohibition arrived, a large number of experienced bootleggers were already in business. For them, prohibition simply meant an opportunity to expand their operations.

In Oakland, the Police Department soon realized that prohibition enforcement would be difficult. Bootlegging in Oakland began with the arrival of shipments of liquor driven overland from Mexico. (The earliest

bootleggers may have followed the same routes used by the smugglers who sold guns to the revolutionary armies in Mexico throughout this period.) Later, whiskey and other forms of alcohol were brought in by boat. Before long, the "imported goods" were supplemented by the products of clandestine distilleries in the East Bay.

During World War I, when the "morals squad" became the "neutrality squad," and was assigned responsibility for aliens and "slackers," it was also charged with enforcing "wartime prohibition." After national prohibition became the law, liquor enforcement continued to be one of the responsibilities of the morals squad.* The eight or nine officers assigned to the squad (known departmentally as a "special duty unit") were specialists in the enforcement of all the laws against gambling, prostitution, narcotics, and alcohol.

The squad was manifestly understaffed. Chief Drew resisted the tendency of officers in other parts of the Department to leave "morals" enforcement to the special duty unit. On February 27, 1923, he issued the first of several General Orders on the responsibility of all officers for these violations:

All officers of this Department will be held personally responsible for the enforcement of all laws pertaining to narcotics, the State Prohibition Act, prostitution and gambling on their respective beats, and make special reports to their commanding officer as to existing conditions, and also give their full cooperation to Special Duty men on cases which they cannot handle individually.

This applies not only to patrolmen, but also to corporals and sergeants in their respective districts.

Any failure to strictly comply with this order will be deemed sufficient cause for a charge of neglect of duty being preferred.

Sergeant Edward Brock,** one of the outstanding officers of this period, was in charge of the special duty unit during the first phase of prohibition. Some of his encounters with bootlegging included the following:

- Before the Labor Day parade in 1926, as Lieutenant Brock aligned the officers at 3d and Washington Streets, he caught a whiff of a

*Federal prohibition agents made arrests under the Volstead Act. Oakland police made arrests under the Wright Act, a parallel law usually referred to as the State Prohibition Act.

**Edward William Brock was born in 1878. Appointed as a Patrolman January 1, 1906; promoted to Corporal, April 15, 1913, and Sergeant, October 1, 1918; appointed Lieutenant, August 7, 1924. Married, with three children, one of whom became a Deputy Chief of the Department. He retired on June 1, 1937, and passed away on January 21, 1968.

familiar odor. After the parade, he returned to the intersection with his special duty squad, and they entered a building formerly occupied by a foundry. They discovered a 1,000-gallon still creating pure alcohol. They also found approximately 10,000 gallons of cane sugar mash and 300 gallons of alcohol. Worth \$10,000, the equipment in the still produced alcohol at a rate of a gallon a minute. The alcohol, the mash, and the still were destroyed, and two men were arrested.

- On one occasion, Brock destroyed forty gallons of bootleg liquor which had been stored in the vault in the Captain of Inspectors' office. The city chemist had pronounced most of it unfit for human consumption. (He said there were "enough weird chemicals in it to kill a regiment.") Brock began pouring it into a city hall sink, and within five minutes the fumes gave him a headache. After another five minutes, by which time he had finished the job, his eyesight was somewhat blurred. It took him several days to recover.

The "Lessons" of Prohibition

Prohibition has long been derided as a failure, and as an object lesson in the folly of "trying to legislate morality." J. C. Furnas expressed this when he wrote that it was "a calamitous mistake and we are well rid of it..." However, some scholars have begun to challenge this judgment. For example, Professor Mark Moore of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, wrote recently:

...the conventional view of Prohibition is not supported by the facts.

First...the 18th Amendment and the Volstead Act...were far from all-embracing. The amendment...did not prohibit use, nor production for one's own consumption...

Second, alcoholic beverage consumption declined dramatically during prohibition. Cirrhosis death rates for men were 29.5 per 100,000 in 1911 and 10.7 in 1929. Admissions to state mental hospitals for alcoholic psychosis declined from 10.1 per 100,000 in 1919 to 4.7 in 1928...

...Organized crime may have become more visible and lurid during Prohibition, but it existed before and after.

Prohibition did not end alcohol use. What is remarkable, however, is that a relatively narrow political movement, relying on a relatively weak set of statutes, succeeded in reducing by one-third the consumption of a drug that had wide historical and popular sanction...

The real lesson of Prohibition is that society can, indeed, make a dent in the consumption of drugs through laws. There is a price to be paid for such restrictions, of course. But for drugs such as heroin and cocaine...that price is small relative to the benefits.

The fundamental weakness of prohibition was that vast numbers of people refused to believe that temperate consumption of liquor was bad. Consequently, they did not feel under any strong obligation to abstain. When they discovered that prohibition laws usually could be violated with impunity, the law lost its credibility, and came to be seen as an inconvenience and a burden. The people turned against it. When Oakland officers were indicted for taking payoffs from bootleggers a year before repeal, more comment on the episode was sympathetic than indignant.



Sgt. Edward Brock on a Narcotics raid at 727 Harrison Street: "Mrs. Pong Wong, said to be particularly active in the illegal distribution of narcotics...calmly smoked a cigarette and manifested no concern while Police Sergeant Brock (center, standing) ransacked her belongings for drugs and while A. B. Meader, state board of pharmacy (left), learned over the phone that another alleged drug peddler's house...had just been raided." Prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Earl Warren, Mrs. Pong Wong (who had four previous convictions under the State Poison Act) was sentenced to one to five years in prison.

The Oakland Tribune, March 31, 1921

Increased Levels of Violence

Although national statistics show an increase in homicide during the years 1910-1920 and a leveling off during the 1920s, the general level of violence in Oakland actually appears to have increased. This may have been due simply to the increasing size of the city, or to the increased mobility of criminals brought about by the automobile, or both. In any case, the Department responded vigorously, and its members earned respect with a notable record of heroism during the decade. The following commendations published in the Police Bulletin indicate the types of dangerous situations encountered by Oakland officers:

July 6, 1920:

Especial credit is due Inspector Richard V. McSorley for his vigilance, intuition, resourcefulness and splendid judgement in arresting the following highway men, to wit: E. M. Stone, Frank J. Frye, Daniel Dreaner and Edward Collins

These men had committed several desperate hold-ups of citizens, and were becoming bolder each time, causing a reign of terror. On July 2, 1920, Inspector R. V. McSorley's keen observation led him to have suspicions of these four men from the meager descriptions given the Police Department from the victims of the hold-up men. Inspector McSorley being convinced they were much wanted men arrested them and obtained their confession of guilt.

Inspectors Van Houtte, Rossick, Keefe and Patrolman J. J. Dunn ably assisted Inspector McSorley in cleaning up the work of the dangerous quartet of highwaymen and placing them safely behind prison bars.

January 3, 1922:

Upon the recommendations of their Commanding Officers, I take pleasure in highly commending Patrolman A. R. York, Acting Inspector Wm. Haldeman, and particularly Assistant Inspector J. M. Enright for the courage, bravery and strict attention to duty displayed by them on the morning of January 2, 1922, when in the face of impending danger and death Inspector Joseph M. Enright stood his ground like a man and an officer, and engaged in a revolver duel with August C. Grabowski in a room at 1805 - 7th Street, this city, who had mortally wounded a citizen named Philip Brady, and dangerously wounded another citizen named Andrew McClaughey. A. C. Grabowski continued to fire directly at Inspector Joseph M. Enright who unflinchingly exchanged shots with Grabowski and succeeded in wounding him three times and placing him under arrest. Grabowski is now facing a charge of Murder and Assault with a Deadly Weapon with Intent to Commit Murder.

October 22, 1922:

Captain T. Brown and the following Officers at his command: P. J. Petersen, C. B. Jennings, G. E. Ellenberger, A. Crandall, W. Weiben, D. L. Jones, G. P. Banford and W. C. Morris are highly deserving of exceptional praise and extraordinary commendation for the promptness, alertness and ability displayed by them in apprehending two desperate highwaymen, Henry Schaffer and William McMahon, and the intelligent, fearless and courageous discharge of their duty on this occasion.

On Sunday morning, October 22, 1922, the above named Officers under the command of Captain T. Brown, following a series of highway robberies committed by Henry Schaffer and William McMahon in this city and in Contra Costa County, in response to a telephone message pursued the highwaymen and engaged them in a revolver duel in which both Schaffer and McMahon were killed.

In connection with the above excellent work by Captain T. Brown and Officers of his command of the the Eastern Police Division, creditable mention is due Inspectors B. A. Wallman and George D. Burbank for their alertness, excellent ability and prompt apprehension of Robert Murphy, Edward Bellani and William Castro, associates of the two dead bandits, Schaffer and McMahon; Murphy and Bellani being wanted in Contra Costa County for highway robbery in which Schaffer and McMahon participated, and Castro wanted in this city for grand larceny. Schaffer was also wanted in Los Angeles for highway robbery, and McMahon was wanted in San Francisco in connection with the shooting of Officer Barron of the San Francisco Police Department.

Police work of this character, the results obtained and the efficient manner and excellent judgement shown by every Officer connected with this particular case is worthy of the highest commendation of society.

February 9, 1926:

Patrolman Walter Garrett of the Central Police division is highly commended for the exceptional ability displayed by him in arresting Ronald Bateman and Claude Brooks for numerous robberies of Mutual Groceries in this city.

While patrolling his beat Patrolman Walter Garrett's suspicions were aroused by an automobile standing unoccupied, and after a patient watch the above two men were arrested when they attempted to enter the automobile, and who were positively identified by victims and charged with robbery.

The close attention to duty, and the intelligent observation of Officer Walter Garrett is deserving of great praise and worthy of emulation by all officers.



Funeral Cortege of Inspector W. J. Davis
leaving Sacred Heart Church at 40th and Grove Streets,
January 7, 1928.

October 12, 1926:

Upon the recommendation of his Commanding Officer I wish to commend Inspector of Police William Marshall of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation for the exceptional ability displayed by him in arresting on October 4, 1926, Allen Roy Sesman, with aliases, a notorious holdup man who had committed more than fifty holdups in our city.

The alertness, close attention to duty and intelligent observation of Inspector William Marshall cannot pass unnoticed, and he will be allowed five days vacation with full pay for his splendid work in making this arrest.

April 1, 1928:

Living up to the high ideals and the splendid traditions of the Oakland Police Department, Inspector John P. Mulhern while on his way home accompanied by his wife on April 6, 1928, at 9:45 p.m., saw a man in the act of holding up a gas station at Hobart and Grove Streets, and prompted by a sense of duty as a police officer, immediately left his wife and, regardless of the danger confronting him, placed the holdup man under arrest. To add to the danger of the situation, many well-meaning citizens gathered, thinking the officer to be a holdup man, but

Inspector Mulhern satisfied the citizens, brought order out of chaos, and secured his prisoner.

Police work of this kind cannot be too highly commended -- an excellent example for emulation by all officers; and it gives me great pleasure to commend Inspector John P. Mulhern for his attention to duty, his alertness, good judgment and fearless action.

These deeds were not accomplished without cost. Three police officers were slain during the decade -- Officer John F. McCarthy, Inspector William J. Davis, and Officer Ernest H. Philbrick.

Chief Marshall*

In 1927 new City Councilmembers were elected, creating a change in the balance of power on the council, and Charles C. Young became Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, replacing Frank Colbourn.

Commissioner Young chose Donald L. Marshall, a highly regarded detective on the staff of District Attorney Earl Warren, as the new Chief of Police. Don Marshall had not sought to become Oakland's Chief, and he was surprised to be chosen. He accepted the offer and, the first Chief chosen from outside the Department since 1898, was appointed on July 11, 1927.

Crowd Control

Over the years, the Department had developed impressive skill at crowd control. Soon after Chief Marshall took office, two major events at the Municipal Airport tested the Department's reputation in this area. The first was the "Dole Hawaiian Island Derby," and the second was a visit to Oakland by Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh.

When Lindbergh flew the "Spirit of St. Louis" from New York to Paris in May, 1927, he became the first person to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, and he won a \$25,000 prize in the process. This exploit made him the greatest popular hero of the 1920s, and America went mad over airplanes and airplane races.

*Born in Clayton, N.Y., February 17, 1890, as a young man Don Marshall spent two years as a sailor before enlisting in the regular army in 1909. He served until 1912, including a tour of duty in the Philippines. When the U.S. entered World War I he reenlisted in the Army, earning the rank of Lieutenant in the artillery, and serving in two offensives in 1918. After the Armistice, he was placed in charge of the military police at Brest for nine months. He came to Oakland in 1919 and entered the field of law enforcement. After his term as Chief of Police, he held several positions in State law enforcement. He passed away in 1962 at 72 years of age.



Chief Donald L. Marshall

On the West Coast pilots were soon emulating Lindbergh. In June, Lt. Lester Maitland and Lt. Albert Hegenberger flew the "Bird of Paradise," a Fokker C-2 tri-motor bomber, from Oakland to Oahu, completing the first flight from the mainland of the United States to Hawaii. They were followed a month later by the first two civilians to make the flight in a single-engined aircraft, Ernie Smith* and Emory Bronte, flying the "City of Oakland." Each of these record-making flights drew crowds, but the largest crowds of all came to see the the Dole Hawaiian Island Derby and to see Lindbergh himself when he came to Oakland.

The Dole Hawaiian Island Derby, sponsored by James Dole (of the Dole Pineapple Company), was an airplane race from Oakland to Hawaii. Run on August 16, 1927, it offered prizes of \$25,000 to the winner and \$10,000 to the runner up. Twelve planes were entered in the race, but -- in what might have seemed ominous in a less giddy atmosphere -- three crashed en route to Oakland. Only nine arrived safely, and one of these was disqualified when race officials learned it could not carry enough fuel to complete the journey.

Thousands of Bay Area residents flocked to the new Oakland Municipal Airport on the morning of the race. As recorded on film, the crowds -- and the air crews -- were in an exuberant, celebratory mood. When all the

*Father of Captain Ernest B. Smith, OPD, Retired.



Charles Lindbergh

preparations had been completed, and the aircraft checked out and pronounced ready, the remaining eight planes took off, one after another. Two crashed before getting airborne, but the crowds cheered as the other six rose into the sky and turned toward the Golden Gate.

Shortly afterward, two developed mechanical problems and returned to the field, but the remaining four continued on out over the pacific.

The next day two of the four arrived in Hawaii, and the other two were declared missing.

Despite a frantic search by ships and aircraft (including Navy flyers from the aircraft carrier Langley), no sign was ever found of the two missing planes. The crew of "The Spirit of Dallas," one of the planes which had been forced out of the race by mechanical problems, joined the search and the tragedy was compounded when it too was lost at sea.

Sober judgment after the fact tells us that this trans-Pacific race was an ill-conceived affair: little more than a slaughter of the innocents. And yet, the occasion seems to have been fondly remembered by those who were

there. It was exciting, and it gave the spectators a sense of participating in the conquest of the air.

On September 17, 1927, Lindbergh flew "The Spirit of Saint Louis" over downtown Oakland and then landed at Oakland Airport. He had come to attend the Airport's official dedication, and a crowd of over 50,000 people came out to see him. Once again, Oakland burst forth in a tremendous celebration of civic pride.

On both occasions, traffic officers worked overtime to relieve traffic jams -- which were still new to the American scene. Foot patrolmen controlled the mass of people, keeping them well away from the runway. The smooth management of the crowds at both events showed the Department's discipline and commitment to great advantage, as was generously acknowledged by G. B. Hegardt, the Manager of the Port of Oakland, when he wrote to Chief Marshall:

I beg to convey to you and to the members of the Police Department the sincere appreciation of the board and its staff for the splendid manner in which the enormous crowd in attendance at the celebration at Oakland's Municipal Airport were handled during Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh's visit last Saturday, September 17th...

If I may be permitted, I would also like to refer at this time to our experience on the occasion of the Dole Hawaiian Island Derby...when probably 100,000 people were present, the largest crowd ever assembled in Oakland. We had, on this occasion, numerous conferences in your office on how best to handle this situation and, to be perfectly frank, we were not over-confident that your department alone could do so and suggested that the State Militia be called in to assist. On your positive assurance, however, that you would guarantee satisfactory results, we accepted the plan proposed by your department and it worked to perfection. The crowd was admirably handled and this stands out more prominently when it is understood that this crowd was along a length of 7000 feet on each side of the runway and included the satisfactory parking of about 20,000 automobiles.

With this Dole flight record already to your credit, all details connected with the Lindbergh celebration were settled at a conference of less than fifteen minutes, with the excellent results already noted...

The general public has been quick to realize your splendid services and the universal commendations thereof are well deserved.

The Police Bulletin: A Record of the Decade

The Police Bulletin continued to be published once a week. It contained General Orders, revisions of the Municipal Code, praise for outstanding police work, information on fugitives and stolen cars, and much more. The following quotations are typical, and they give us an incomparable view of the day-to-day operations of the Department in the 1920s -- a look at the

hard work, successes, failures, small frustrations and good times experienced by the members of the Department as they performed their daily duties.

General Orders

December 28, 1920:

New Year's Eve, December 31, 1920, will be celebrated without doubt in the same joyous spirit which has characterized the same event in former years.

Commanding Officers will detail a large force of men to the business section, and also an adequate number of Officers to regulate traffic.

Officers will not permit crowds to congregate at any particular point, nor allow anyone to use paint brushes, feather dusters, branches of trees or other contrivances calculated to annoy any person. False mustaches or other methods of disguises will not be allowed.

It is my desire to take this opportunity to wish each and every Officer in this Department, a prosperous and Happy New Year.

August 25, 1925:

In view of the increasing prevalence of Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis), the Statute of the State of California relating to the common drinking cup will be enforced by this Department.

If facilities for proper sterilization of glasses and cups are not available, the use of paper cups is suggested. This Department trusts that you will give your fullest co-operation in carrying out this act. A copy of this act follows...

November 17, 1925:

Kindly be advised that effective November 16, 1925, Patrolman R. A. Newman was suspended from duty for a period of three days for Neglect of Duty, to-wit: Failing to report at proper Police Report Box.

October 26, 1926:

Saturday night, October 30, 1926, being the night before Hallowe'en, may be largely celebrated in view of the fact that Hallowe'en Night, October 31st, comes on a Sunday night. Therefore, it will be well for all officers to make every effort to suppress any and all acts of violence to property on these two nights, such as removing gates, benches, garbage cans, tearing down of fences, signs, poles, and destroying plants and shrubbery in public parks and private grounds; also, placing of obstructions, grease and torpedos on car tracks, turning off electric light switches, ringing of door bells, tampering with fire and

police alarm boxes and other mischievous acts.

Kindly see that proper action is taken in order that the enjoyment of the evening may be kept within due bounds and perfect order maintained throughout the city.

December 17, 1929:

Police officers have no more privileges than any other citizen in reference to the parking of their private automobiles, and must obey and respect the traffic laws and officers the same as anyone else.

Some officers have the habit of riding in their private cars to the City Hall, leaving their cars in the street all day long. This is unfair to the merchants and other citizens who have business to transact in our congested business district.

I have instructed the Traffic Bureau to tag the private cars of officers violating the traffic ordinances, and not to excuse such violations.

While I am on this subject of parking, you are again reminded that officers are not to endeavor to get excused tags that may be presented to them by friends.

The co-operation and assistance of every officer is needed to eliminate the congestion caused by parking in loading zones, parking overtime and double parking, particularly during the busy holiday season.

Wanted By This Department

March 23, 1920:

NOTE -- This Department holds Arrest Warrants for persons whose descriptions appear under this headline.

6718. Wanted for passing checks and for petit larceny. CLEMENT O'NEAL, alias Charles R. Holmes, age, 26; height 5 ft. 10½ in.; weight, 159; medium build; chestnut hair; brown eyes; medium complexion. Occupation, photographer. Oakland No. 6115. Finger-print: 28/8 O/O. Bertillon: 78.6: 82.4: 93.6: 18.7: 16.0: 18.7: 6.4: 27.3: 12.3: 9.5: 48.6. San Francisco No. 27-874. Long Beach, Cal., No. 838.

He is a clever shop lifter and obtainer of goods under false pretense, uses the scheme of ordering merchandise by telephone using a fictitious name and later calling for such goods which are supposed to have been charged to the party ordering same.

November 15, 1921:

7290. Wanted for failure to provide for minor child, THEOPHILE J.

PELLEGRIN: Age 37; height 5 ft. 7 in.; weight 210; smooth shaven; olive complexion; dark eyes; black hair. He is an engineer for the S.P. R.R. Co., in Los Angeles, Cal., and lives at the Windsor Hotel in that city.

December 5, 1922:

7661. Wanted for embezzlement, CAREY HARRISON: Age 33; height 5 ft. 9 in.; weight 163; fair complexion; blue eyes. Oakland No. 2883. Finger-prints: 1/1 aA2a 4/--. Now supposed to be on way to Mexico.

July 17, 1923:

8758. Wanted for assault with a deadly weapon, RAY BARTMAN: Age 19; height 5 ft. 6 in.; weight 140; light complexion; light hair; thin face. He wore white corduroy trousers. Parents have a rooming house on Mills or Miles Street, Turlock, Cal., and he did work at the Humes Cannery in that city.

October 4, 1927:

A-307. Wanted for forgery, GLADYS DYKES: Age 20; height 5 ft. 7. in; weight 135; dark brown hair; dark complexion; protruding mouth. This woman travels with her husband, described as 24 years of age, height 5 ft. 6 in., weight 140; light complexion, blue eyes, reddish hair. He usually works as a clerk for some railroad.

December 17, 1929:

A-1154. Wanted for extortion, WM. WHALEN: Age 30; height 5 ft. 10 in.; weight 162; dark chestnut hair; blue eyes; medium complexion. He sometimes wears spectacles. Alleged to have represented himself as a police officer and extorted money purported to be for bail from complainant.

Stolen Automobiles

November 30, 1920:

J-461. CHANDLER 4 pass. Speedster: engine #71136; license #119-208; color, light blue with wheels black; Hartford windshield; tires, 4 Silvertowns 1 a spare, 1 Goodrich; right fender bent; 1920 model.

September 25, 1923:

M-565. Ford touring; license 831379; engine 4401262; model 1920.

R-49. Hudson speedster; license 1392-257; engine 137975.

January 10, 1928:

R-53. Studebaker touring; model 1923; license 1775-674; engine 99901.

December 17, 1929:

S-1786. Chevrolet roadster; model 1925; license 1B-88-54; engine 166586.

Cancellations

September 21, 1920:

No. 6860 Vol. 7 #37, Arthur Bryson, arrested for failure to provide.

January 18, 1921:

J-381. Chalmers touring: engineer #86460; license #385-577, recovered.

July 31, 1923:

No. 8758 in No. 29, Vol. 10. Ray Bartman, arrested for assault with a deadly weapon.

May 17, 1927:

Cancel item No. A-157 in Bulletin No. 19, Vol. 14, R. C. McKinney arrested for felony embezzlement.

Operations of the Courts*

April 24, 1923:

Superior Court:

Howard Robinson, sentenced to San Quentin for burglary and prior, by Judge Church...

Sam Pappas, sentenced to San Quentin for forgery, by Judge Church...

Police Court:

John L. Hewitt, Mary R. Washburn and Fred Nash, each held to superior court for burglary by Judge Hennessey, Dept. 1.

W. R. Clark, held to superior court for passing checks, no funds, by Judge Hennessey, Dept. 1.

*After the Bulletin in which these notices were printed, reports on the activities of the courts were discontinued.

Missing Person

January 2, 1923:

C. K. SCHUMATE disappeared from his home at 3000 Broadway, Oakland, Calif., on December 24, 1922.

Age 30; height 5 ft. 7/8 in.; complexion, medium; eyes brown; hair brown. He wore a blue serge suit.

This man left his home to go to his office on the evening of December 24, 1922, to do some work, and has not been seen since. His auto was found at Isabella and Market Streets the following morning.

Communications

City of Berkeley
November 23, 1920

Mr. J. F. Lynch, Chief of Police,
Oakland, California

Dear Sir: -- I am greatly indebted to you for the services rendered by the sixteen police officers who were detailed for duty in Berkeley during the foot-ball game last Saturday. The traffic problems were splendidly handled by your officers, and to their credit it should be said that not a single complaint was reported during the entire day. There were no losses by theft from automobiles; no automobile was taken by joy-riders, and no complaints from any of the citizens or visitors regarding the officers' conduct were received.

We are grateful to you for the splendid spirit of cooperation, and sincerely trust that an opportunity to reciprocate may be ours at some time in the future.

Yours very truly,

August Vollmer,
Chief of Police

* * * * *

Oakland, Cal.,
Jan. 14, 1921

Mr. J. F. Lynch, Chief of Police,
Oakland, California

My Dear Chief: -- Now that the Clark trial has come to a conclusion, I want to take this opportunity to commend the work of your department, and particularly the work of Capt. Drew, and the work of McSorley,

Rossick and Tracy. The efforts of Capt. Drew obtained for us the correspondence between Mrs. Clark, Woodcock and Long. This correspondence was of signal benefit to us.

I know that you will pardon me if I seem to single out a young man in the department, but I am doing it because he is a young man in the Inspectors' Office, and I know that none of the older members will feel hurt at my doing so, but I want particularly to commend the work of Robert Tracy. His work in this case, his absolute fairness on the stand, and the clearness with which he gave his testimony was one of the great factors in bringing about the conviction of Virginia Clark.

Yours sincerely,

Ezra W. Decoto,
District Attorney

* * * * * *

Office of Sheriff
Alameda County, California
September 12, 1923

James T. Drew, Chief of Police
Oakland, Calif.

My dear Chief: -- The courteous official treatment extended to this office on the part of Inspector Bodie Wallman of your department, was directly the means of apprehending Robert Dean, an escaped prisoner from the county jail.

Permit me at this time to express to you my sincere thanks and appreciation for this kindness and also the many other courtesies extended this office in the past.

Yours most sincerely,

Frank Barnett,
Sheriff

* * * * * *

City of Berkeley
September 25, 1923

James T. Drew, Chief of Police,
Oakland, Calif.

Dear Sir: Please accept the heartfelt thanks of myself and this organization for the excellent service rendered our citizens by Captains



Fighting Fire in Leona Heights
September 17, 1923

Lynch and Bock, Sergeant Hemphill, and the men of their commands during the recent catastrophe.*

Without their help in our hour of need we should have faced insurmountable difficulties; with their wonderful cooperation we suffered no fatalities, no looting and no serious crimes.

Gratefully yours,

C.D. Lee,
Acting Chief of Police

* * * * * *

* The catastrophe was "the great Berkeley fire" of September 16, 1923. A brush fire swept down out of Wildcat Canyon and destroyed 584 buildings in the residential district north of the University campus. The fire was fought by 2,000 fireman and more than 4,000 student volunteers.

Police Court No. 2
City of Oakland
Oakland California,
April 18, 1924

James T. Drew, Chief of Police
Oakland California

Dear Chief: I believe you will be interested in knowing that there is nobody awaiting a preliminary examination of a felony charge in my Court, and that for the past four days no one has been brought before me on a felony charge. This record is, in my opinion, a silent tribute to the Police Department under the leadership of yourself and Captain McSorley.

It ought to be reassuring and pleasing to our citizens to know that, notwithstanding Oakland is the third largest city in the State, the lawless element that commit the most serious criminal offenses consider it a very dangerous place in which to perpetrate their crimes.

Yours very truly,

Edward J. Tyrrell,
Judge of Department No. 2

* * * * *

Oakland, Calif.
July 28, 1925

Hon. Frank Colbourn,
Commissioner of Public Health & Safety
City Hall, Oakland, Calif.

My Dear Commissioner: -- I desire to take this opportunity of thanking you for the splendid work of Captain McSorley and Inspectors Wallman and Tracy in the recent bunco cases involving the so-called Gollet Oil Company merger. The further perpetration of this gigantic fraud upon the public has been prevented by the prompt and efficient service rendered by the three officers above named. Their efforts were untiring and properly resulted in the indictment of the guilty parties.

With best wishes, I am
Very truly yours,

Earl Warren,
District Attorney

* * * * *



Mary Pickford and Officer "Bow Wow" Goodwin,
November 11, 1927, Armistice Day Parade

Oakland, Cal.,
Dec. 5, 1928

Charles C. Young, Commissioner
Public Health and Safety
Oakland California

Dear Sir:

Officer M. J. Kennedy, No. 303, at 12:30 p.m. today saved my baby's life at the extreme risk of his life. The youngster got from under our watchful eyes and walked into the thick of the traffic at 47th and Telegraph. Officer 303 took one glance and, throwing himself in the midst of the traffic, caught the baby from practically underneath the street car, the motorman of which did not see the youngster as he came past an automobile which also barely missed him.

For superb courage, fast thinking and lightening action this can never be repeated. Please do all you can to help me show my, or rather, our, deepest appreciation. My wife has just come out of the hospital, and

had anything happened it would have killed her. And then such a disregard for his own safety. Would you could have seen it. Officer Kennedy is just such a man. He will do anybody favors and will go out of his way to do it. And he is always the same. A wonderful man and officer.

Yours truly,

Mr. and Mrs. H. Verwer

* * * * *

The H. C. Capwell Co.
Oakland, Calif.,
Aug. 5, 1929

Mr. Donald L. Marshall,
Chief of Police
Oakland Cal.

Dear Chief Marshall:

As our new store closes after its first day's business at Broadway, 20th and Telegraph, I want to take this opportunity of thanking you and your Captain and Lieutenants and men for the very efficient assistance afforded us in connection with the opening of our new store. Our requests were cheerfully and promptly cared for, and Mr. Dinkelspiel and I want to thank you and your Department for your help.

Cordially yours,

E. C. Lipman,
Manager

To All Members

February 8, 1921:

Establishment of Police Aerial Squadron: Please be advised of the formation of the Oakland Aero Police Squadron as an auxiliary of this Department. The squadron will be in command of R. C. Durant with rank of Captain, his subordinates being Leo Dawson and Reed Chambers. The three pilots have been sworn in as Special Police Officers and their duties will be to supervise all aerial exhibitions over the City as well as to escort distinguished guests into Oakland. On emergency calls their services will be available for the quick transportation of Police Officers to points where they may be needed. The captain in charge of this division will be obeyed and respected accordingly.*

*Despite this and other efforts, the Department did not really take to the air until the Helicopter Detail was established in 1971.

April 10, 1923:

All members of the Oakland Police Department, through the courtesy of Mr. J. Cal. Ewing, President and Manager of the Oakland Baseball Club, are invited to attend the baseball games played at the baseball park located in Emeryville on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays of each week, except when a holiday falls on one of these days, and they will be admitted upon showing their badge at the gate.

July 31, 1923:

Examination for Captain of Inspectors:
Change of Examination Date

The Civil Service Board announces that Inspector R. V. McSorley* is the only candidate who has filed an application for examination as Captain of Inspectors. Due notice having been given to each eligible, and waivers of examination having been received in favor of Inspector McSorley, the examination date has been set forward by the Civil Service Board to Tuesday, July 31st, instead of August 21st.

The Civil Service Board appreciates and commends the splendid spirit shown by the Captains, Lieutenants, and Inspectors in declining examination, as a demonstration of confidence, loyalty and esteem for Inspector McSorley, who has served so long and faithfully in the department.

By Order of the Civil Service Board,

Chas. C. DeWolf,
Secretary and Chief Examiner

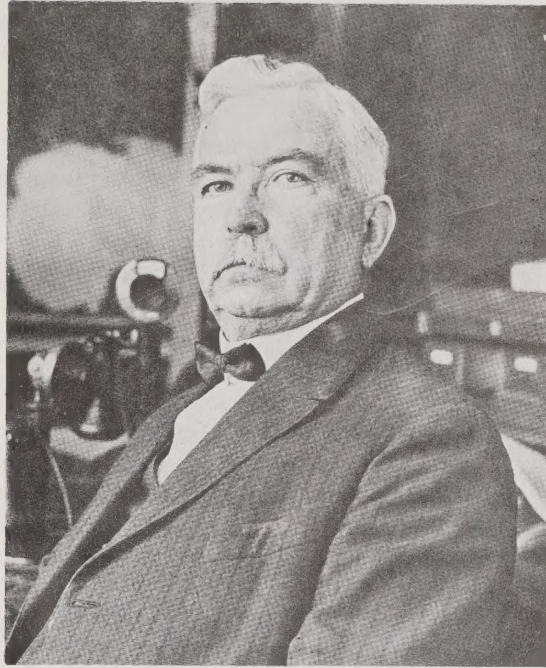
Acknowledgement of Appreciation

July 25, 1923
Oakland, Cal.

James T. Drew, Chief of Police
Oakland, California

Dear Sir: Through you I wish to thank the Captains, Lieutenants and Inspectors of the Oakland Police Department who waived the Captain of

*Richard V. McSorley was born on February 11, 1864. He was appointed to the Department on January 8, 1898, appointed an Inspector on July 1, 1907, and promoted to Captain of Inspectors on August 8, 1923. One of the Department's very distinguished officers, he retired on November 1, 1926, and passed away on January 20, 1949.



Richard V. McSorley,
Captain of Inspectors

Inspectors' Examination through friendship to me.

By their generous action leaving the field open to me alone they sacrificed their possibility of gaining a better position which would carry with it better pay.

I deeply appreciate this act of loyalty which moved them to give way to me and the remembrance will be cherished in my heart as long as I live.

Richard V. McSorley
Acting Captain of Inspectors

October 16, 1923:

Commencing November 1, 1923, the first day of each and every month will be pay day for this Department. All members of this Department are therefore instructed to refrain from calling by Telephone or making inquiries at the office of the City Treasurer, City Auditor, City Hall Telephone Operators or Chief of Police regarding pay day.

November 17, 1925:

The Oakland Police Department Baseball Team is scheduled to play a three-game series with the San Francisco Police Department Baseball Team, commencing Saturday, November 21, 1925, 2:00 p.m., at the Oakland Baseball Park.

The Oakland Police Department Baseball Team has won 14 out of the last 18 games, and our Team wishes the continued moral support of every man not actually on duty next Saturday afternoon to come out and root for the Home Team and bring all your friends with you. Our Team is going good, and the game will be well worth the time spent watching it.

May 17, 1927:

Upon the recommendation of their commanding officer, Patrolmen John J. Cooney and Deverette C. Campbell, both assigned to duty in the Central Police division, are deserving of high commendation for their attention to duty, courage, and assistance in rescuing Chinese families during a fire which occurred at 7:30 a.m., Tuesday, April 19, 1927, at 527 Webster Street, this city, without thought of their own safety.

The building in question was occupied on the upper floor by Chinese families, many of whom were asleep at the time. Officer Cooney ran up the smoke-filled stairway and hallways and kicked at the various doors of the lodgers, arousing many of them and escorting the frightened inmates to places of safety. The building burned fiercely and Officer Cooney in his work of rescue received burns on the hands and neck due to hot tar which dripped from the roof of the doomed structure. His uniform was also damaged.

Officer Campbell, who patrols the adjoining beat, saw the smoke from the burning building, and immediately commandeered a passing auto and arriving at the fire rushed up into the flames, and very materially assisted Officer Cooney in the work of saving human lives. Officer Campbell also received burns and a damaged uniform.

Great personal risk was assumed by both officers due to the fact that the building was old and of flimsy construction, and the roof threatened to cave in at any moment.

Police service of this type is worthy of emulation by all officers.

December 31, 1929

The beginning of another year now being welcomed I want to express my appreciation for the manner in which the members of our Department as a whole have performed their duties. My wish is that every man and his family enjoys a Happy and Prosperous New Year.



Earl Warren, District Attorney
of Alameda County (1925-1939)

In contemplating the record and achievements of the Department throughout the past year, we find many things of which we can well be proud. Let us renew our pledge of service to our citizens and strive during the coming year to exceed the accomplishments we have already made. With good sense, kindness of heart, and the proper self-respect you are urged to carry on.

Again wishing you all a Happy New Year, I am,

Sincerely,

Donald L. Marshall
Chief of Police

One Era Ends, And Another Begins

As the decade drew to a close, District Attorney Earl Warren began an investigation of the paving industry in Oakland. It led, almost directly, to three city councilmen -- William H. Parker, the Commissioner of Streets,

Eugene K. Sturgis, the Commissioner of Finance, and Charles C. Young, the Commissioner of Public Health and Safety.

These Commissioners had formed a majority on the Council and were allies against Mayor Davie. As a consequence, although the Mayor remained personally as popular as ever, his influence had begun to fade. Even though Warren's investigation drove these councilmen from office and briefly restored the Mayor's influence, it became evident that the Davie era in Oakland was drawing to a close. The Warren era in Alameda County was beginning.

Warren's investigation of the Oakland paving industry aimed at a characteristic type of municipal corruption of the period. The principal City official in the case, William H. Parker, the Commissioner of Streets, had "arranged" a system of kickbacks for paving contracts, and received one-half cent per square foot for each surface to be paved. "Considering the many miles of pavement laid in the City of Oakland," Warren wrote, "this came to a sizable sum." Many businessmen were implicated, and Commissioners Sturgis and Young had, in Warren's view, at least guilty knowledge of the racket.

When he had developed sufficient evidence, Warren went before the Grand Jury and obtained "an indictment against Parker for bribery, and accusations of willful and corrupt misconduct in office against him and two other commissioners." All three resigned, and the proceedings for "willful and corrupt misconduct" ended because "removal from office was the only penalty in such cases." The prosecution of former Commissioner Parker on felony bribery charges, of course, continued.

The Grand Jury discovered that Commissioner Young's engineering firm performed numerous small jobs for various suspected paving contractors (drawing blueprints, surveying, etc.). His firm does not seem to have charged more than \$100 for any of these services. On March 18, 1930, in his unhappy letter of resignation, Young wrote, "My work has always been above board but, unfortunately for me, my private practice and public duties seemed to conflict."

On March 19, Mayor Davie reappointed Frank Colbourn as Commissioner of Public Health and Safety. Colbourn, on the following day, dismissed Chief Marshall, although his integrity had never been questioned, and reappointed Chief Drew. In a farewell to the Department, Marshall wrote,

I am leaving the Oakland Police Department. Such are the vicissitudes of politics, but in leaving I take with me the pleasant memory of almost three years of service with you, during which time I acquired many true and loyal friends among you...It is indeed with regret that I leave and I want to thank one and all for the support and co-operation you have tendered me as your Chief.

The paving scandal led to a long and complicated graft trial. Before it ended, Warren had discredited the commission system of City government once

and for all. In summing up the investigation, he wrote:

The results, I felt, were satisfactory. Imprisoned were the corrupt commissioner, the head of the paving combine, and some of the patent paving people. Removed from office were three of the five commissioners for willful and corrupt misconduct. The vacancies were filled by competent and honest men, and the public in the November election abolished the commission form of government and replaced it with the more efficient city manager-council form, which has served the city well ever since.

The new Council-City Manager form of government provided for a council consisting of nine members, one of whom was chosen by the others to serve as Mayor. Naturally, they chose Mayor Davie, but, as Beth Bagwell observed in her history of Oakland, the city manager system put an end to Mayor Davie's style of politics. Unhappy with the new system, he announced his retirement on February 2, 1931, and at the end of his term he "retired in splendor to his apartment in the Hotel Oakland." He died there on February 2, 1934 at eighty-four years of age.*

*In 1951 the Charter was amended again to provide for direct election of the Mayor by the people. A new City Charter was adopted in 1968 to clarify the 1911 Charter, which had become unusable due to the hundreds of changes enacted in special elections over the years. In the new charter, all boards and commissions (except the Board of Port Commissioners, the Civil Service Board, the Board of Education and the employee retirement boards) were reduced to advisory status.

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